



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Reciprocity Policies

I. Introduction

This document is a collection of standalone reciprocity policies that may or may not relate to one another. Some repetition may occur where relevant components apply to different policies.

Each policy identified below supersedes any previous versions and will take effect on the date of signature.

The following topics are included within this policy:

- A. Driving Privilege Reciprocity
- B. Driver License Issuance Reciprocity
- C. New Texas Residents
- D. NATO Reciprocity
- E. "A" and "G" Visa Diplomats

II. Statements of Policy

A. Driving Privilege Reciprocity

The Driver License Division (DLD) is not responsible for administering driving privilege reciprocity. Driving privilege reciprocity allows a person to use a valid foreign license to operate a motor vehicle in Texas. The provisions of these agreements are utilized by courts and law enforcement.

1. International

The state's recognition of driving privilege reciprocity is governed by various international agreements coordinated and signed by the federal government. States are not informed when changes are made to these agreements; therefore, CSRs should refer customers to the websites noted below for specific provisions and the most current list of countries included in these federal agreements.

2. International Agreements

The following agreements govern the provisions for driving privilege reciprocity:

- 1949 World Convention on International Road Traffic
https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetailsV.aspx?src=treaty&mtdsg_no=xi-b-1&chapter=11&Temp=mtdsg5&lang=en
- 1943 Inter-American Convention on the Regulation of Inter-American Automotive Traffic
http://www.oas.org/dil/treaties_C-11_Convention_on_the_Regulation_of_Inter-American_Auto-Motive_Traffic.PDF
- U.S. State Department consideration by the signature of a former governor includes the former republics of the USSR and Yugoslavia as beneficiaries of international reciprocity. This includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Kazakstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia.

Drivers of commercial vehicles from all foreign countries are subject to the state and federal laws in determining the driver license requirements. Only the Canadian Commercial Driver License and Licensia Federal (Mexico) are



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recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation as having full reciprocity for driving privileges in the state of Texas.

3. General Provisions of International Agreements

- Reciprocal privileges are limited to ages 18 to 75 and for a period not to exceed one year from date of entry into the United States or other country.
- Reciprocal privileges are limited to private vehicles. Carriage of persons for hire or goods other than personal baggage of the occupants of the vehicles is not authorized. This excludes all commercial buses, trucks, and trailers.
- Every vehicle must have a registration certificate issued in accordance with the laws of the country of residence and identifying the vehicle and owner. The vehicle registration number must be shown on the rear of the vehicle or on a plate attached to the rear.
- The vehicle must also show on the rear an oval sign or plaque to indicate the country from which it comes.
- Every driver must have a valid driver permit (license) issued by a contracting country or state or an international permit issued by an authorized authority in the form of a booklet containing identification and photograph of the bearer and pages printed in several languages including English.
 - The United States Department of State does not issue international driving permits, but authorizes the American Automobile Association and the American Touring Alliance to issue oval United States plaques and international driving permits. Applications are accepted by any American Automobile Association office.

4. Interstate/U.S. Territories/Canada

A resident of another U.S. state, District of Columbia, U.S. territories, or a province of Canada who is:

- At least 16 years of age may drive in Texas on a valid Class C- or M-equivalent license issued by his or her home jurisdiction.
- At least 18 years of age may drive the same vehicles in Texas as he or she may drive at home as a Class A, B, C or M operator.

The license issuing U.S. territories are identified as follows: American Samoa, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Marianas, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Relevant statutes:

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.030. Reciprocal License.

5. U.S. Military

Any person is exempt from license requirements while operating an official motor vehicle in the scope of service to Texas or U.S. military forces.

A person on active military duty who holds a valid driver license issued by the U.S. armed forces in a foreign country may drive the following vehicles in Texas for 90 days from the date of his or her return to the U.S.:

- Any vehicle designated on or by the license certificate; or



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- Any vehicle of a lower class than the one designated on the license certificate (motorcycles must be designated).

Relevant statutes:

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.027. Persons Exempt from License Requirement.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.028. Effect of Military Service on License Requirement.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.085. Type of Vehicle Authorized.

B. Driver License Issuance Reciprocity

1. International

Texas currently maintains reciprocity agreements with four foreign countries that allow license holders from those countries to obtain an equivalent driver license in Texas without taking the knowledge or skills exam. These four countries are:

- (1) Germany (effective March 24, 2009);
- (2) France (effective February 25, 2010);
- (3) South Korea (effective September 9, 2011); and
- (4) Taiwan (effective June 6, 2014).

A former resident of one of these countries who now resides in Texas may obtain a Class C driver license without taking the knowledge or skills exam if he or she:

- Surrenders the foreign license;
 - If the applicant chooses to keep their foreign license, they must pass the knowledge and skills exam applicable to the type of license sought
 - If the information on the foreign license is unable to be verified due to a language barrier, the applicant must provide a certified translation of the license into English
- Is 18 years of age or older;
- Passes the vision exam;
- Presents satisfactory proof of identity;
- Presents satisfactory proof of either U.S. citizenship or lawful presence;
- Presents satisfactory proof of Texas residency;
 - The applicant must have resided in Texas for at least 30 days unless he or she surrenders the valid foreign license
- Presents satisfactory proof of vehicle registration and insurance, if he or she owns a vehicle; and
- Passes a practical exam and/or presents medical documentation attesting to physical or mental capabilities if there is cause to believe that the applicant is not physically or mentally qualified to operate a motor vehicle.

Applicants who hold a driver license from any country, other than those with reciprocity agreements, must take all required exams.

Persons presenting a Mexican driver license are subject to the same exam requirements as those from any other country without driver license reciprocity.



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- A 1943 treaty between the U.S. and Mexico exempts any consular officer, member of their family, and employees who are Mexican nationals from paying the required licensing fee provided they are not engaged in any private occupation for gain and are able to show proper identification. The comptroller of public accounts issues consular exemption certificates which are sufficient identification to qualify for the waiver of the fee.

Relevant statutes:

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.0305. Agreements with Foreign Countries.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.142. Application for Original License.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.1426. Domicile Requirement; Verification.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.144. Application by New State Resident.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.161. Examination of License Applicants.

Relevant rules:

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.24. Identification of Applicants.

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.46. Citizenship Status and County of Residence.

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.49. Proof of Domicile.

2. Interstate/U.S. Territories/Canada

An applicant that is a former resident of another U.S. state, District of Columbia, U.S. territory, or province of Canada who now resides in Texas may obtain a Class C or Class M driver license with the same restrictions and endorsements without taking the knowledge or skills exam if he or she:

- Surrenders any valid license(s) issued by another U.S. state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. territory, or a province of Canada or submits a *Receipt for Surrendered License* (DL-2);
- Is 18 years of age or older;
- Passes the vision exam;
- Presents satisfactory proof of identity;
- Presents satisfactory proof of either US citizenship or lawful presence;
- Presents satisfactory proof of Texas residency—(the applicant must have resided in Texas for at least 30 days unless he or she surrenders the valid foreign license);
- Presents satisfactory proof of vehicle registration and insurance, if he or she owns a vehicle; and
- Passes a practical exam and/or presents medical documentation attesting to physical or mental capabilities if there is cause to believe that the applicant is not physically or mentally qualified to operate a motor vehicle.

Those under 18 years of age are subject to the Graduated Driver License Program and the skills exam may not be waived.

Any advance in grade or modifications of any restrictions and endorsements will require completion of the appropriate examinations.

Relevant statutes (continued on next page):

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.142. Application for Original License.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.1426. Domicile Requirement; Verification.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.144. Application by New State Resident.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.161. Examination of License Applicants.



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TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.164. Exemption from Certain Examination Requirements for Licensed Nonresidents.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.182. Surrender of License Issued by Other Jurisdiction.

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.204. Restrictions on Minor.

Relevant rules:

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.24. Identification of Applicants.

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.46. Citizenship Status and County of Residence.

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.49. Proof of Domicile.

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.55. Waiver of Knowledge and/or Skills Tests.

3. U.S. Military

An applicant with a valid U.S. military or U.S. Armed Forces license seeking a Texas driver license for the same or lower class license must take the knowledge and vision exams and pay the fee, but does not have to take the skills exam.

Relevant rules:

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.55. Waiver of Knowledge and/or Skills Tests.

C. New Texas Residents

A person who enters Texas as a new resident may operate a motor vehicle for no more than 90 days after the date on which he or she enters the state. Such a person:

- Must be 16 years of age or older and
- Hold a valid driver license issued by the state or country of previous residence.

Relevant statutes:

TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. §521.029. Operation of Motor Vehicle by New State Residents.

D. NATO Reciprocity

A North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) agreement requires Texas to extend certain privileges to any member of a force or civilian component of a NATO country. If a qualifying individual presents orders validating his or her official status, Texas shall either:

- **For the purpose of driving privileges:** accept a driving permit, license, or military permit as valid to operate a motor vehicle in the U.S. without a driving test or fee; or
- **For the purpose of driver license issuance:** issue a Texas license with the vision exam and fee but without the skills and knowledge exams for the same or lower class license.

A NATO applicant must present satisfactory proof of Texas Residency; however, he or she is not required to meet the minimum residency requirement of 30 days.

NATO reciprocity only applies to actual members of the military or its civilian components and does not apply to spouses or dependents.



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The current NATO member countries are: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain, and the United States of America.

For the most up to date list of all NATO member countries, refer to the following website:
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/nato_countries.htm

E. "A" and "G" Visa Diplomats

The family members of consuls or an individual with any "A" or "G" visa with diplomatic status will be issued a Texas license if the applicant presents a letter from the Department of State that states he or she is not eligible for a Department of State license. An applicant with an "A" or "G" visa who attempts to obtain a driver license without a letter of ineligibility should be referred to the Department of State.

"A" and "G" visa diplomats must present satisfactory proof of Texas Residency; however, they are not required to meet the minimum residency requirement of 30 days.

Exams for the United States Department of State will be conducted by driver license personnel without a fee for the issuance of a Department of State driver license. Examinations may include vision exams, written exams, and driving exams. Unless the exams are provided by the State Department, Texas exams will be administered. Exam results will be recorded on documents provided by the State Department.

Relevant rules:

37 TEXAS ADMIN. CODE §15.93. Out-of-state Examinations and Applications.



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9/9/2015
Date